



HERALD/ANDREW COUNCILL

DURANGO MAYOR Lee Goddard and City Parks and Recreation Director Cathy Metz walk the Riverfront Trail underpass of U.S. Highway 160 Friday before a dedication ceremony. The underpass links two sections of trail and cost \$229,000 to complete. Federal grants contributed \$120,000 with the city picking up the rest of the tab.

Trails experts study impacts of recreation on wildlife

By Dave Ojala
Herald Staff Writer

The working landscape of the American West is becoming a playground, and it is time for a real look at how the way we play affects our surroundings.

Gore-tex and bicycle helmets replace denim and hard hats in a shift many think beneficial for natural treasures. But the perception of recreation as a benign use of the environment needs to be challenged by the agencies charged with looking after public lands, wildlife experts said Friday.

After winning some battles against logging, mining and grazing on public lands, the people who are doing the playing must take an honest look at how recreation can harm the environment.

"The great difference, of

course, is that this time it is our ox that will be gored in the minds of some," said Richard Knight, a Colorado State University associate professor of wildlife biology.

He was one of three speakers Friday kicking off a two-day conference on wildlife and trails recreation at the Strater Hotel. Organized by the San Juan Mountains Association, formerly the San Juan National Forest Association, the conference drew people from across Colorado and a few from New Mexico, Utah and Arizona.

Knight presented the results of a census of songbirds near trails in the Boulder area, showing that most species normally expected could be seen near the trails. But more birds were found farther from the trails, and young in nests also had a better chance of survival away from trails.

He said trails appear to serve as "ecological edges," where bird reproduction declines and there is less nesting.

His study, and others like it, point to the need for careful placement of recreational sites, he said. The decision will be determined by what is considered more valuable, trails or wildlife.

Those values are changing in Colorado and across the country.

Harry Zinn, also a professor from CSU, said studies he's done statewide show Coloradans moving away from viewing wildlife as a resource to be used. More and more, the state's residents see wildlife as an amenity to be protected and enhanced.

The results of his study show scenery, wildlife watching and the state's abundance of wildlife as

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TRAILS

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three of the most important reasons people choose to live here. While the state's natural resources attract people, the rapid growth of the state means there is less for everyone to enjoy.

Overall, 91 percent of the state's residents had an opinion on wildlife, with 27 percent supporting more rights for animals, 31 percent considering animals a resource to be used and 32 percent somewhere in the middle.

Zinn found newcomers to the state are not responsible for the shift in opinions on wildlife. Instead, the change is mostly the result of differences between young and old, rural and urban. The largest split in opinions on wildlife came between people making a living in agriculture and those who don't.

The shifting balance is evident

in state politics, with the Colorado Division of Wildlife adopting stricter trapping regulations last year, only to have the agricultural community grab control of "depre-dating animals" in legislation passed last month.

"That is not the last chapter," said John Mumma, director of the DOW appointed last December, who spoke first Friday.

He said polls show people in the state now favor an end to trapping and may gain the upper hand with a ballot initiative now being proposed.

Mumma said too often government agencies and the public focus on the multiple use doctrine guiding agencies but ignore the other half of the policy — sustained yield.

Sustained yield means trails may not be the correct use for every piece of public land, he said, and cooperative planning between federal, state and local governments is

needed to decide where recreation fits into the landscape.

He said the DOW under his direction will act as an advocate for wildlife in conflicts with people, but without becoming an adversary. With Colorado predicted to keep growing and more people asking for more recreation, he knows the role may not be popular.

"It doesn't take a rocket scientist to know that those aren't going to be loving relationships all the time."

30 HERALD

Judge OKs Sunnyside Gold, state pact on mine cleanup

By Electa Draper

Herald Regional Editor

The Sunnyside Gold Corp. filed a final consent decree in District Court in Denver this week that resolves its two-year lawsuit against the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment over closure of its mine near Silverton.

The decree, signed by a judge Wednesday, made final a landmark agreement reached by the state and Sunnyside's owner, Echo Bay Inc., in February.

Sunnyside will be able to seal up its own mine and obtain release from its discharge permits in exchange for cleaning up historic mine tailings and wastes at Boulder Creek, Pride of the West, Koehler Longfellow and four other Upper

Animas Basin sites.

The health department had sought to hold Sunnyside liable for any discharge, seeps or springs surfacing after Sunnyside plugs, hydraulically seals and floods its American Tunnel.

Sunnyside sued the health department in May 1994 to prevent it from requiring discharge permits for new "point-source pollution" (heavy metals).

If all goes as planned, Sunnyside's improvement of water quality at other sites in the basin will offset any degradation of water quality attributable to hydraulically sealing its mine and suspending water treatment at the site.

Sunnyside now expects to close the valve at the face of the massive concrete plug in the American Tunnel by the end of June.

The last of San Juan County's big mining operations, Sunnyside Gold Mine shut down in 1991 after having produced gold and other metals off and on since 1872.

About two years ago, Sunnyside Gold Corp., the mine's last operator, began its final phase of reclamation, plugging four mine tunnels with steel-reinforced concrete to divert water flowing out of mine portals into natural channels. It held off closing the valve in the American Tunnel, however, until resolution of its dispute over discharge permits.

Sunnyside has spent \$9.9 million in reclamation at the mine and at Mayflower Mill. The company expects to spend \$5 million to \$10 million over two years to achieve the reclamation required in its settlement with the state.

5/11/96
Dunne & Associates

TUESDAY TATTLER



ANIMAS CLEANUP

The third annual **Animas River Cleanup** is Thursday. The first cleaning shift will begin at 9 a.m.; the second shift will start at 5 p.m. Volunteers should meet at the Visitors Center gazebo at Gateway Park.

Event organizer **Alex Mickel** said even 10 minutes of individual effort will help make Durango a more beautiful place to live.

Scheduled activities include cleanup of the Horse Gulch area by the **Kiwanis Club**; cleanup along the river, from the walking bridge to Junction Creek, by **Durango High School** students; and, removal of big trash (such as old cars) from the river by the **Durango Public Works Department**.

Volunteers should be prepared with gloves, work clothes, sun

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Workshop participants ask agencies for joint planning on trails, wildlife

By **Dave Ojala**
Herald Staff Writer

The wildlife roaming the hills near Durango know no boundaries, and participants at a week-end conference on trails and wildlife said the best way to manage public lands may be for agencies to forget their boundaries.

Workshops at the conference, attended by interested citizens and public officials, produced a call for the agencies to come up with a joint plan for giving trail users places to hike, bike and ride while keeping the impact on wildlife as small as possible.

The conference, organized by the San Juan Mountains Association, began Friday with speakers outlining the effects trails have on wildlife and public attitudes toward wildlife.

On Saturday, participants broke up into groups to talk about how to balance recreation and wildlife.

"The fact that the dialogue about this has started is very exciting," said Ed Zink of Trails 2000, a nonprofit organization working on local trail development.

Unlike wildlife, he said trail

developers are keenly aware of agency boundaries, where the rules and regulations for trail development and use can change. One tract considered crucial wildlife habitat may sit next to another that a different agency considers prime for recreation.

He said more consistent rules and regulations are needed for use and development of trails. If two agencies have adjoining land, he said, both should agree on whether a trail should run up the middle of a meadow or on the side, at the bottom of a hill or on top.

He added that most trail advocates are also wildlife advocates and are willing to work to keep their impact on habitat and animals to a minimum.

Besides urging cooperation among agencies, participants in Saturday's workshops stressed the need to compensate and protect private landowners who provide recreational opportunities and locate trails where they will least affect wildlife.

But two other major points were brought out: Trails can be considered a form of transportation needed to link parks, recreation areas, schools and other

facilities people use often; and, public agencies can lose public support if they do not allow and encourage access to their lands.

Cal Joyner, supervisor for both the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management local offices, suggested an interagency task force begin work on recreational and wildlife planning around Durango.

What people are asking of government, he said, is to "help ensure the community succeeds in its own self-expressed, self-identified way, around recreation, around wildlife preservation.

"Those are two things that are key to the identity of this community. That's what makes it Durango."

Cathy Metz, the city of Durango's Parks and Recreation Director, said the conference was a springboard for work to come as the city looks to create a trail network. She said participation by citizens, not just agency people, was a strong point of the conference.

Together, the city, Forest Service, BLM, DOW and La Plata County should be able to anticipate wildlife issues and make sure they are worked through before trails are built, she said.

Durango Herald

May 17, 1996

Gravel pit expansion gets thumbs-down from planners

By Karen Kunde

Herald Staff Writer

The La Plata County Planning Commission recommended denial of a gravel pit expansion in Marvel Thursday, after neighbors complained of noise, dust and speeding trucks.

The Hubbs Gravel Pit lies on 943 acres east of Marvel on County Road 133, and is operated by the county.

The county contracts out the gravel crushing but does its own hauling. It is the primary user of the site, but there also are some private haulers from New Mexico.

The Hubbs family, which owns the site, proposes to phase-in expansion from the existing 10 acres to more than 30 acres. The hours would be 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Neighbors complained of large, noisy trucks exceeding speed limits and worried that as the gravel pit grew to a closer proximity to some of them, the dust and noise problems would get worse.

Project Agent Brian Kimmel said stockpiling of materials and careful placement of machinery would help buffer impacts.

He said the gravel operation is limited to 70,000 tons a year, and the bulk of the crushing is done in the spring. "It's a seasonal operation. They work off the stockpiles

for the rest of the year."

The dust and noise is created not only by the gravel pit work but by the traffic, said John Ellis of County Road 131.

"It's really offensive" and is a danger to livestock and children, he said.

For operations to continue another 30 years or so "is really not acceptable to the community," he said.

Barbara Harris of County Road 133 said the beeping from the gravel operations is "just like an alarm clock in our bedroom."

Nina Ellis said she has cattle, horses and show dogs to care for. When she got up at 6 a.m. Thursday to begin her chores, she said she saw dust so thick it could have been fog.

She said has flagged down speeding trucks and told them they were going too fast "and they laughed at me." She said a couple of the truckers almost ran her down.

Stop signs and yield signs have been placed at the 131/133 intersection - and more recently a 35 mph speed limit sign.

"They don't even draw a deep breath when they go through the stop signs," John Ellis said.

Commission Chairwoman Jan Neleigh said it was one thing to get county truck drivers to comply, but

out-of-town haulers were another matter.

Commissioner Beverly Kaiser said although commissioners could lobby for a 25 mph speed limit and mandate treating the roads for dust, the crusher and beeper still would make noise and bother neighbors.

Both Neleigh and Commissioner Dan Schler relayed personal experiences living in areas affected by gravel pit operations.

Kaiser made the motion for denial. Schler seconded it. The vote was 3-0.

Schler said that although he was sensitive to the need for gravel in the county he wanted to see further work on the project to make more compatible.

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In other action Thursday, commissioners recommended for approval:

■ Ron and Carline Mattison's request to add 450 square feet to an existing home and establish a three-bedroom Hermosa Creek Bed and Breakfast at 32466 U.S. Highway 550 north.

■ Roy Newman's request for master plan and preliminary plat approval for Pegasus West subdivision, 7000 County Road 203. He would subdivide 25 acres into four 1-acre single-family lots and a 20-acre lot.

A-LP's holding tribes' water hostage

TO THE EDITOR:

The constant delays in the construction of A-LP is hardly because of the opposition. It's partly due to shabby work, the Bureau of Reclamation's environmental statement, and a seemingly total disregard for the law, which has prompted intervention from federal court.

As for the tribes, these Anglo champions of Indian rights are in effect holding the tribe's water hostage until the completion of their wasteful project.

In most places, except maybe here, that's called extortion.

Rod Craig
Durango

Durango Herald 5/5/96

Letters to the Editor

5/12/96

Water Festival created a big splash

TO THE EDITOR:

Water festivals have been sweeping the country. Congratulations to Mary Fenwick and the Southwestern Water Conservation District for coordinating the first Water Festival for La Plata County. It was April 26 and 27 at the Fairgrounds Extension Building.

It made a splash.

About 760 fifth- and sixth-graders from Bayfield, Fort Lewis Mesa and Durango schools accompanied by some 27 teachers learned all about water. La Plata County 4-H participants sold rolls, candy and coffee. Students were furnished a drink and cookies. F-Hers and Riverwatchers from Miller and Durango High guided students through the 20 or more exhibits. Fred Kroeger was the "Water Wizard" and quizzed students on water facts.

Saturday was opened to the public - it was your loss if you missed it. Brochures on groundwater, conservation tips and water agencies, along with T-shirts and coloring books were available. There were videos and a live, hook-up to the Internet. Fishing and habi-

tat tips were explained.

The Water Information Program with the Ground Water Foundation networks with water festival organizers across the United States and foreign countries, sharing successful water education, activities and materials for students, educators and the general public.

Organizers supporting water festivals are water districts, government agencies, the Environmental Protection Agency and health departments. The newsletter "Sprinkles" and the journal "Aquifer" are available.

I am looking forward to the second Water Festival and thanks to the Southwestern Water Conservation District and Mary Fenwick.

Did you know: Durango has approximately 16 inches of rainfall per year compared to Miami's 60 inches, so remember to be water wise.

Gladys McBee, water chairman
League of Women Voters
Durango

Sunnyside Gold, state resolve lawsuit

RMN 5/17/96

Firm agrees to maintain and improve water in Upper Animas Basin

Associated Press

Sunnyside Gold Corp. and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment on Monday signed an agreement resolving a 2-year-old lawsuit over cleanup of the Sunnyside Mine near Silverton.

The agreement calls for Sunnyside to maintain and improve water quality in the Upper Animas River Basin. In return, the state has removed objections to Sunnyside's reclamation efforts.

"This agreement shows that

the department and responsible companies in the mining industry can find common ground to solve some of the difficult reclamation issues that arise around the state," said Patti Shwayder, the health department's acting director.

Sunnyside Gold, a wholly owned subsidiary of Denver-based Echo Bay Inc., sued the health department in 1994 for clarification on the state's enforcement of water-quality rules regarding hazardous discharges from naturally occurring seeps and springs.

Sunnyside has invested \$9.9 million in reclamation efforts at the Sunnyside and Mayflower mills and estimates it will spend another \$5 million to \$10 million

on five other sites over the next two years.

The long-abandoned sites are leaching metals such as iron, manganese, zinc and aluminum into the Animas River and its tributaries.

In addition to taking cleanup measures at its own sites, Sunnyside also has agreed to remove waste piles and other mining debris from property it doesn't own.

Shwayder said Colorado is protected in the agreement by a \$5 million surety bond.

The Sunnyside Mine operated from the 1880s through 1991, when it closed after the economically viable gold deposits ran out and the base metals market would no longer support operation costs.

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Domingo Herald 5/10/97

Landowners call for action on gas seeps

Local officials look to state, industry for data, solutions

By Electa Draper
Herald Regional Editor

Worsening gas seeps have some landowners fuming, and La Plata County, tribal and federal officials recommend the state and industry more aggressively combat methane and hydrogen sulfide leaks along the Fruitland Coal outcrop.

"It's not just a few dead trees," county technical adviser Warren Holland said Thursday morning at a meeting of the multiagency Gas and Oil Regulatory Team (GORT).

Holland said the spreading seeps zones, marked by dying vegetation, are a blight that has affected property values and endangered residents in at least two homes.

"This raises the big question, 'What causes the seeps and what, if anything, can be done about it?'"

Holland said he knows the region has a long history of naturally occurring seeps.

"I accept that, but I also see with my own eyes ... the (seep zones) are larger than ever," he said. "I think a lot more needs to be done, and I think it needs to be done a lot more forcefully."

Holland said seems clear that industry's extraction of millions of gallons of groundwater is a factor in the seeps' spread.

Pine River Ranches resident Randy Ferris, one of several homeowners plagued by potentially explosive methane, said he knows many people in the community think the seeps are the isolated problem of a few unlucky people. But the seeps are spreading, he said, and could begin to affect others.

A recent survey of seeps shows methane and/or hydrogen sulfide gas is escaping in several main

bands. A four-mile-long zone extends westward from the southern end of the Pine River Ranches subdivision along South Texas Creek. One band runs for a mile where the Florida River crosses County Road 234. A 1½-mile band extends down a canyon, past Carbon Junction (state Highway 3 and U.S. Highway 550/160) and across the Animas River. A half-mile band runs across Ridges Basin.

Several people report now being able to smell hydrogen sulfide gas in the area of Escalante Middle School. Holland said the county could investigate conditions at the school upon the request of the school board. Scientists do not believe gas is seeping on school grounds — just within smelling distance.

Amoco Production Co. has taken some positive steps to improve safety at Pine River Ranches, Holland said, but he would like to see stronger measures. He also suggested an independent consultant collaborate on the Pine River mitigation pilot project run by Amoco under supervision of the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission.

Amoco consultant Paul Oldaker said the effort to test the effectiveness of venting gas from its source rock — underground coals, sandstone and shales — has been delayed because of access problems and other issues. He said he requires more data about underground reservoir characteristics before he can predict whether venting will slow seeps and, if so, how far out from the vent. It isn't known if any significant relief can be provided for subdivision residents.

Holland said the project has

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Domingo Herald 5/12/96

Gas rule rewrite ready for public eye

By Electa Draper
Herald Regional Editor

After a lengthy and fractious process, the group rewriting the rules on oil and gas development in La Plata County is ready to acquaint the public with its draft revisions at a workshop 6:30 p.m. Wednesday in the Anasazi Room of the courthouse.

Not every member of the La Plata County Oil and Gas Work Group is equally enthusiastic about the draft produced by county Planning Engineer Mike Russell. But Russell and County Commissioner Josh Joswick say it represents a fair and balanced approach to the often conflicting interests of industry and the outside community.

The work group's representatives from industry generally find the regulations onerous, arbitrary and preemptive of the state's regulatory authority. On the other hand, environmental and realty interests in the group have complained the regs are too weak.

A sampling of the draft regs:

Emergency Preparedness Plan Required

■ Each operator would be required to provide an emergency plan, filed with the county and updated annually, that would consist, at a minimum, of: a facilities map; the names, addresses and 24-hour emergency telephone numbers of at least two people responsible for emergency field operations; and, a written response plan for explosions, fire, gas or water pipeline leaks or ruptures, toxic gas emissions or hazardous material spills.

Project-specific emergency plans would be required for any drilling in zones known to contain hydrogen sulfide gas.

Major Facilities Master Plan Required

■ Each operator would provide

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SEEPS

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2072
drifted. One of its early selling points, he said, was the expectation venting could be more quickly done and more quickly judged than injecting water underground, which was the original plan.

"It's fair to say a lot of people are frustrated, including us," said COGCC Executive Director Rich Griebeling. "I don't think it is a (result) of nobody doing anything."

The BLM's San Juan Resource Area Manager, Cal Joyner, said the BLM has jurisdiction over one well in the Texas Creek area, and it plans to take aggressive action in determining what should be done, perhaps even shutting in the well. Joyner said the BLM and the Forest Service (for which he is also an associate supervisor) have "considerable concern" over the apparently worsening seeps.

The Southern Ute Reservation also is home to seeps and vents along the Fruitland outcrop. Although the seeps are in a rela-

tively remote and unpopulated area, the Valencia Canyon Gap about five miles east of Redmesa, the tribe fully intends to have some control of the wayward gas this summer.

"The (Tribal) Council wants us to fix it," said tribal geologist Dick Baughman.

He outlined an ambitious plan to vent gas and to convert more than 10 gas wells (poor producers along the outcrop) into monitor wells. The BLM and gas operators Fuelco and Emerald have been cooperating fully, Baughman said.

A group of landowners involved in lawsuits against industry alleging contamination of their soil, air and water from gas production issued a statement:

"We are encouraged that the independent investigations by La Plata County, the BLM and the Southern Ute Indian Tribe have reinforced the link between gas drilling and methane-related contamination of water and soil in certain parts of the San Juan Basin.

Letters to the Editor

Donna Howard

5/10/96

A-LP is akin to other, past injustices

TO THE EDITOR:

It is astounding to me there are folks in this community who, having been here for a decade or more, choose to sit idly by and watch the water boards do "what's good for the community as a whole" never questioning their motives. I've been living in Southwest Colorado for 22 of my 31 years and I've observed many injustices committed by "Corporate Durango."

One that comes to mind is Smelter Mountain. In 1969, when the mill shut down operations little was said about possible health hazards related to its continued existence on the banks of the Animas. From 1942 to 1959 two vanadium corporations discharged untreated uranium liquor directly into Lightner Creek and the Animas River. Remedial cleanup measures weren't taken until 1987, 14 years after the

Vanadium Corporation of America stopped selling its product to the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission.

(See the "Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial Action Project 1993 Environmental Report" at the Fort Lewis library.)

The gravest injustice of all, however, is the one about to be committed on the banks of the same river, on the same location by people of like-minded mentalities "for the greater good of the community." My God, how long are "we citizens" going to allow this insane perpetuation of short-sighted abuse to continue? The Animas-La Plata Project makes almost as much sense as two decades of uranium processing on the banks of the river of lost souls.

Jonathon "Johann" Morton
Hesperus

Durango 5/12/96 Dry weather devastating area farmers

By Dave Ojala
Herald Staff Writer

Will 1996 bring the big dry on La Plata County? A sign might be even lowly bindweed is struggling to grow in some areas.

There are plenty of numbers portraying the dryness this spring, but some of the most telling information comes from people on the land.

■ Burning bans and fire danger, Page 12A

Near Red Mesa, Pat Greer said this spring is the driest he's seen in 60 years. He's already gotten his season's water out of the Revival ditch. He said people who use water stored in Red Mesa Reservoir generally wait for a second hay crop to begin irrigating, but they are using it for the first crop this year.

And the recent wind, which never seems to stop, is making the dry weather worse.

"In some places, where the grass is usually a foot high, there's nothing there," Greer said. "It's just a patch of brown."

Bob Taylor farms some land west of the La Plata River and said some winter wheat planted last fall looks good, but he's abandoned several hundred acres that generally produce crops.

"Even the bindweed is having a hard time coming up," he said. "It's having a tremendous impact."

The dry weather is driving up costs for farmers and ranchers who see little hope of regaining their investment this year. Taylor has had to spray mites and Russian aphids, a job he said quickly runs up a bill of thousands of dollars, after the dry winter and spring produced a bumper crop of the insects.

Greer said some ranchers are

still feeding hay when livestock should be grazing in pastures. The extra cost is double trouble to cattle ranchers who face a drastic drop in beef prices, down more than 50 percent from two years ago. Greer said the current price is a loss for most ranchers.

"You can't sell them, but if you hold on to them, you can't find the hay to feed them," he said.

Both Greer and Taylor said the dry conditions could be enough to force some people out of agriculture this year, and Greer said this is the type of year water from the proposed Animas-La Plata Project could have been put to good use.

Ken Beegles at the Colorado Division of Water Resources in Durango said reservoirs in the area have quite a bit of water stored but could suffer substantial depletion by summer's end. He said Lemon Reservoir may be drawn dry if conditions don't improve, and Vallecito Reservoir could be drawn very low.

"This potentially could be one of the worst years that we've had," he said.

At higher elevations, data from the Natural Resources Conservation Service shows the snowpack's moisture content, as of Wednesday of last week, ranged from 33 percent of average in the Upper San Juan Basin to 58 percent of average at Molas Lake, with the areawide average somewhere around 30 percent.

Below 10,000 feet in elevation, all reporting sites in the San Miguel, Dolores, Animas and San Juan river basins have less than 10 percent of the average.

The Bureau of Reclamation, NRCS and United States Geological Survey forecast for reservoir inflows from April through July shows Vallecito Reservoir can expect 49 percent of its normal in-flow;

■ See DRY, Page 12A

Durango 5/12/96 Durango owes its existence to train

TO THE EDITOR:

It has made the Denver papers. Certain residents of Durango are "tired of living with smoke from the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad."

Well, maybe they should consider moving somewhere else. It really irks me whenever I hear of people who willingly move in next door to an entity they don't like, then proceed to complain about it. That happened to Denver's Stapleton Airport for many years until they now have Denver International Airport out in the middle of nowhere.

Developers and potential residents are just itching to build next to it now, you can bet so that they can someday complain about its noise.

No one alive in Durango today has been there as long as the railroad. It was completed in 1882. The city of Durango was built for and because of the railroad and the city owes its very existence and liveli-

hood to this very successful line that has not missed a beat in the last 114 years. The nostalgia and historic significance of this beautiful train is in part due to the continued use of coal-fed steam engines, like the railroad has always used.

Yes, I am a rail fan and have ridden, chased and photographed the narrow-gauge train more times than I can remember ever since my first ride back in 1958 when I came in all the way from Alamosa by rail. The five or so engines idling in the yards today are nothing compared to those early years when train service was active to Alamosa, Farmington and Silverton.

The D&SNG railroad is one of the best operated lines in the nation and I would hope all residents of Durango would feel proud to be a part of its heritage.

Ron Ruhoff
Evergreen, Colo.